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ABSTRACT

A project in collaborative teacher-based research was undertaken at Madison Area Technical College in Wisconsin as a background study for eventual implementation of teacher research in the Adult Basic Education (ABE) classroom. Personnel involved included an individual who served as both a director and consultant and five part-time teachers. The teachers attended a conference on teacher-based research, collected resources through online searches, and met together for collaborative planning and sharing of research. The teachers agreed that students should be informed about the research plans early in the process. Issues identified in the series of project meetings included the following: (1) finding a research question and remaining on the research timeline; (2) sharing research through publication and presentation; (3) student attendance in ABE classes; (4) confidentiality; (5) instructor isolation and collegial support; and (6) instructor time and support. A plan and timeline for conducting the research was developed, but the pilot study was not funded. (The annotated bibliography of 47 citations developed during the preliminary project is included in this report.) (KC)

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COLLABORATIVE TEACHER-BASED RESEARCH
A REPORT ON THE 1995-1996 PROJECT

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INTRODUCTION

> When teachers study and write about their work, they make their own distinctive ways of knowing about teaching and learning more visible to themselves and others. The questions about practice that prompt further inequity, the aspects of school life that teachers regard as evidence, and the interpretive frameworks that teachers bring to bear on classroom data alter what we know about teaching and learning. As a body of work, teachers' research has the potential to call into question and, over time, to redefine the knowledge base itself. Taken together, this research makes a powerful argument for the emic perspectives that teachers are uniquely positioned to provide.
> (Cochran-Smith and Lytle, 1993, p.115)

Teacher research developed historically from the action research movement, begun in Great Britain in the 1950's and 60's. In fact the notion of teachers reflecting on their practice and integrating their observations into their practice and theory of education can be traced to the work of John Dewey early in this century. Teacher research has become an acknowledged tool for staff development and empowerment, as well as a method for interpreting and constructing positive learning experiences in the classroom. Teachers have received support to do classroom research in many K-12 districts nation-wide. However, in the realm of adult education it is a relatively new and underutilized strategy.

The project in collaborative teacher-based research described in this report was undertaken as a background study for eventual implementation of teacher research as a pilot in the ABE classroom. The project was conducted at Madison Area Technical College in Madison, Wisconsin with consultation provided by a University of Wisconsin faculty member. The project director and consultant met and worked with five part-time teachers in the College's Alternative Learning Division (ALD), Two of the instructors worked in learning center environments at campus outreach centers, two others taught English as a Second Language, and one taught in the downtown campus Learning Center. In the ALD Learning Centers, students are assigned a faculty advisor who provides guidance and assistance to their primarily independent study. Most students are adults studying to improve basic skills or working to complete a high school equivalency option. The ESL classes are generally more structured and the student population exhibits a wide range of English literacy skills.

Goals and objectives for the project were identified in two initial planning meetings facilitated by the director and consultant. Our primary goal was to design a model which could be piloted in the future. It was assumed that conducting teacher research with the ABE population would present unique challenges and opportunities not as yet described in most of the existing literature. To determine the nature of the existing knowledge base, a comprehensive literature search was undertaken and the resources discovered in this search were used to inform the collaborative training and planning process. Experts working in the field of teacher research in adult literacy settings were identified and contacted for more information.

In the spirit of teacher-based research, it was assumed that the classroom instructors involved in the study were experts in the issues they confronted daily in their classroom. They became the expert informants to the project. They were responsible for reading and critiquing selected articles uncovered in the literature search, and through their collaborative brainstorming and ongoing discussions, a plan for piloting a teacher-based research project was eventually developed.

Fortuitously, instructors and the project director were also able to attend a conference on teacher-based research coordinated by the Wisconsin Action Research Network in late April of the project year. As anticipated, the conference participants and focus were primarily in the K-12 area, but the opportunity to network with those attending who had already done teacher research and could share their experiences was an important adjunct to the bi-monthly meetings of the project group. Since presenters at the Conference were, for the most part, sharing their experiences with classroom-based research, this forum also served to reinforce the importance of sharing research findings either through presentation or publication.

In the next section of this report, we describe the project activities in more detail, particularly the nature of the collaborative planning process with the teachers. The following section describes key issues related to teacher-based research that emerged from our discussions. Finally, we present a plan for a one-year pilot implementation of a teacher-based research project. The appendix includes an annotated bibliography of resources compiled as part of this year's project.

ACTIVITIES

COLLECTION OF RESOURCES

The resources collected for this project were identified through several on-line searches of the ERIC system and through the selection of materials from existing bibliographic sources. Selected articles were shared with the all members of the project group, but were distributed to coordinate with the focus of individual bi-monthly meetings. For example, the initial sessions were designed to acquaint the instructors with the basic concepts and contexts of collaborative teacher-based research. A typology developed by Cochran-Smith and Lytle (1993) provided an analytical framework with which to explore the differences inherent in university-based and classroom-based research. Other readings were selected to inform meetings focused on identifying the research question, methods of data collection and analysis, and writing up and sharing research findings. Instructors were responsible for reading the articles selected and using them as part of their group discussion at the meetings. Near the end of the project year, instructors re-read and evaluated readings based on their usefulness as a learning resource for teachers being trained to do teacher research. An annotated bibliography of selected resources was developed, incorporating comments from instructors (see Appendix).

COLLABORATION AND PLANNING WITH TEACHERS

Teachers joined this project as a result of their own initiative. The project was described

at a Division staff meeting and instructors were recruited based on their indication of interest in the project and desire to participate. Originally, six instructors (five part-time and one full-time instructor) were recruited. After two meetings, however, the full-time instructor found that the time commitment required was too extensive, and she left the project.

Two initial meetings were scheduled to provide instructors with a historical perspective and background information on teacher research. The concept was new to all teachers participating, and their prior experience and existing understanding of "research" were elicited. Most were familiar with the kinds of research generated in university-based studies and used terms like "quantitative," "statistical," "generalizable," and "replicable," to describe it. Methods of classroom-based research which are generally observational, qualitative, often case-study-based, inductive, and designed to improve individual practice or identify specific issues, were introduced. Most were very comfortable with this definition of research but there was some discussion as to whether classroom-based research was *really* research and whether research designed to inform one's own practice, rather than inform the field as a whole was worth undertaking. Background readings were assigned and a handbook on doing teacher research published by the Virginia Adult Educators Research Network, entitled *The Adult Educator's Guide to Practitioner Research* (Cockley, 1993) was distributed.

It was decided that all participants in the project would keep a journal. Unlike the sort of journal that would be used in the actual collection of research data, the assigned journals were to be used to reflect on readings as well as on classroom practice and the process of teacher research as the group learned more and more about it. The teachers had considerable concern about just what was appropriate for inclusion in the journals and whether or not editing for writing style, spelling, punctuation, etc., was necessary. For all but one instructor, the idea of keeping a journal was a new and not entirely welcome one initially. Some found it difficult to reflect and too time consuming to write.

By the second group meeting, it became clear that the teachers responded well to one another and to the director and consultant. Building collegiality seemed a natural and pleasant process for this group. The instructors, given the irregular nature of their part-time teaching schedules and the geographical distances between their teaching sites, had little opportunity for collaboration or discussion with their peers. It became apparent early on that this opportunity was perceived by the teachers to be critical to this project and indeed, enhancing to their personal growth and development as teachers. In fact, the opportunity to collaborate was the most often cited reason for initially joining the project.

Meeting three focused on using teacher research to initiate social and institutional change. Discussion was somewhat limited, partially because we had experimented with the readings for this meeting by asking that each instructor read a separate article and then report back to the group. It was difficult for those who had not read the article to learn enough about it from the reader's retelling and so, it was decided to return to the original "everyone reads everything" format.

Teachers agreed with the authors of the articles that challenging the system was difficult and felt that lack of institutional clout could make dissent uncomfortable. It was noted, however, that in collaboration there may be strength. On the other hand, one of the instructors suggested, it is difficult to share what might be perceived as professional weaknesses since no one wants to less than competent in front of peers.

For meeting four, articles related to methods were assigned. While methods used in classroom research vary greatly and are generally of a qualitative nature, we felt that instructors would benefit by becoming familiar with a wide variety of potential methods for use in teacher-based research. For example, one article which instructors found to be of great interest but of little practical value in their setting, dealt with researchers visiting their students homes to discover what "funds of knowledge" they brought with them to the classroom (Moll, 1992).

This article and another in which a teacher documented through case studies what she learned from interviewing and visiting with student's parents, provoked a great deal of discussion at the meeting. (Johnson, 1991). Instructors noted that there could be possible legal ramifications of doing this kind of research. One instructor was particularly attracted to this of "total environment' approach, but felt it would be extremely difficult to do with her students, who attended irregularly and also might not welcome her intrusion into other aspects of their lives. Another asked if this method might not produce more knowledge about the students life outside school than "we need or want."

All agreed that students should be informed of the instructor's intent to do research early on in the process. It was felt that the students' participation and cooperation would be necessary from the very beginning, and that ethically they needed to be aware that they were research subjects. There was also discussion about securing written permission from students and how that might be done. All felt that involving students early would show them that their opinions were valued and respected.

We spent very little time discussing the issue of teacher objectivity, which had been expected to be a fertile issue for discussion. Instead the group acknowledged that their research could only be subjective and that as long as that was recognized and included in the findings, it would not present a problem. In fact, as do many published researchers, they saw the subjective nature of classroom observation as one of the strengths of teacher-based research.

Another article, less well received, dealt with incorporating ethnographic methods into classroom research (Zaharlick, 1992). The group felt that articles that were of peripheral value only, as they felt this one was, were too time consuming and that teachers actually involved in research should not be expected to review literature which could not be immediately useful to them. The need for a library of teacher research materials at the downtown site was discussed. The intent of the project consultant and director was to find a central location for all materials

collected so far and those on order. The group agreed that this was essential or teachers could not realistically be required to do a literature search. They would have neither the time nor the support and motivation to conduct a library search to inform their classroom research.

The article, "Qualitative Research Approaches for Everyday Realities," (Anderson, 1994) was used by the project director to facilitate discussion in this meeting. Although it was not distributed to teachers, it was used to help generate a list of possible methods teachers could use to do research, including some not previously identified by the group, such as video and audio taping. Some of the group felt the discussion of methods could be best accomplished by presenting materials that served as examples of any particular method (for example, the case study) rather than devoting a whole meeting to that topic. Others felt this aspect of research did warrant extensive discussion.

The article "Teachers's Voices in the Conversation about Teacher Research" (Threatt in Hollingsworth, 1994) was well liked by this group. While it didn't detail specific methods, teachers enjoyed "listening in" on the conversations described in the article. It was suggested that this article be one of the first distributed to the pilot study teachers. It and the *Adult Educator's Guide to Practitioner Research* (Cockley, 1993) continued to be their favorite training materials.

The practice of journaling continued to be a problem for some in the group, while others seemed to value it more over time. The fact that no structure or "rules" for keeping a journal were provided up-front in the project was of concern to all. It would be expected that this issue would be less important to the group of teachers actually doing research in the pilot, since they would clearly be using journaling as a data collection tool. The reflective nature of the journals and the very personal decisions about content worked well for some in the group and not so well for others.

Attendance at the AROW Conference (Action Research Of Wisconsin Network) on April 29, 1996 was an unplanned but important adjunct to this year's project. The project consultant learned about the Conference through her University connections, and suggested that the group might like to attend. Three instructors and the project director were able to go and all found the Conference to be extremely informative. Its primary value, however, was the opportunity for networking and learning from teachers who had done or were currently doing classroom research. All members of the project, including those who could not attend the Conference, elected to join the organization and thereby keep in touch with other Wisconsin teacher-researchers and receive the newsletter and related information from AROW. Attendance at this Conference also provoked more interest in eventual publication or presentation of research findings. Instructors who attended felt they might like to present a session at next year's Conference dealing with their experience in designing a collaborative teacher-based research model.

The meeting following the AROW Conference, in fact, dealt with sharing results. There continues to be some division in the group, as there is reflected in the literature, about the necessity of sharing. Some members feel that classroom research is valid if it provokes changes

and improvement in teaching practice, whether or not the insights gained in the process are eventually published or presented. There was also concern that writing for publication is a time-consuming and somewhat daunting practice. The materials instructors read for this meeting addressed that concern. In a brief summary related to research reporting and group publication, Mohr and MacLean (1987, pp. 52-53) made the point that a pre-determined deadline is important to give closure to the research process: "Without them, many teacher-researchers could go on happily collecting data in boxes in their dining rooms without ever approaching analysis...". They also felt that the encouragement and support given to individual teachers when the final product is a "modest"group publication, makes the goal a realizable one. Our group agreed that this idea had merit and the possibility of creating a composite picture of the adult learner based on individual observations shared in a group report was proposed.

Lytle, Belzer, and Reumann (1993) suggest that conferences, training programs and workshops need to be opened up to practitioners, as a means of finding new audiences for practitioner research. This is particularly important in the field of adult literacy education where very few forums for this purpose exist:

> The goal here will not be to discover monolithic solutions to complex problems or to discover what works across all contexts but rather to build systems of communicating knowledge so that distinctions about what works in particular communities and for particular and diverse groups of learners and purposes will be more accessible to wider audiences. Practitioner research has much to contribute to the formation of a discourse community that includes as generators of new knowledge those who practice daily in the field. (p. 47)

Those who attended the AROW Conference noted that very few other participants had any familiarity with adult literacy education and educators. Most either worked in the K-12 system, or at the college or university level. There was genuine interest in the unique teaching and learning situation experienced by instructors and adult learners, reinforcing the need for forums across educational levels and settings for the presentation of findings in the practice of adult education.

At the mid-May meeting, discussion returned again to the instability of the adult learner population. It was suggested by the project consultant that the impact of this instability on one's teaching and on one's students might, in fact, be the subject of a research study.

Next, instructors read from the critiques they had prepared of all reading done thus far. There was a great deal of consensus on which articles and readings were the best. Those that presented hands-on information in an easily readable, clear and concise way were favored. The teachers suggested that creating a binder of articles, with the readings numbered in the order in which they were distributed, would be helpful in organizing them. Instructors also agreed that the number of readings assigned was manageable (though sometimes too time-consuming) for this project, but they would need to be carefully edited and reduced for teachers actually involved in the research process.

COMPILATION AND CREATION OF THE ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

The critiques prepared by instructors for this meeting helped to inform the creation of the annotated bibliography appended to this report. This activity was an essential component of the project, since participating instructors had come to the project with little if any knowledge about collaborative teacher-based research. The readings assigned to them and the discussions that followed with the project coordinator and project director were their primary sources of information. We felt that teachers were best able to assess the readings from the perspective of their application to the classroom environment. As noted previously, the lack of literature referring specifically to the adult education situation was problematic. During the course of the project year more of these resources were uncovered, but for the most part, the instructors were required to evaluate literature addressing teacher research in K-12 settings for its potential adaptation to the adult education situation.

The remaining meetings were used to revisit issues which had been identified during the course of the project and to create the actual model for implementing collaborative teacher-based research in the classroom. The next two sections of this report will deal with those identified issues and describe the process and product of developing the model.

ISSUES IN TEACHER-BASED RESEARCH

FINDING A RESEARCH QUESTION AND REMAINING ON THE RESEARCH TIME LINE

As instructors became more knowledgeable about the concept of teacher-based research and the methods they might use to collect and analyze data, they expressed concern that simply identifying a researchable question might take months. They also noted that one's original question might need constant modification or revision, or might eventually prove to be uninteresting or impossible to do. Flexibility in choice of research plan and its operationalization were felt to be critical to the success of any project.

Instructors agreed that the project should have a definite time line and produce conclusive data. They expressed concern, however, that one year was a very short time to both learn about the methods and goals of teacher research and to actually complete a research project. A two- to three-year project was considered more realistic

SHARING RESEARCH THROUGH PUBLICATION AND PRESENTATION

As the project progressed, teachers became somewhat more comfortable with the notion of publishing or presenting their data. While there was strong support for the need to share, particularly among some of the instructors, all expressed some reluctance to engage in what they imagined these activities might entail. They were somewhat comforted to learn that forums were emerging (both publications and conferences) that welcomed teachers' "stories." One instructor reported having learned at the AROW conference that in one research group, individual teacher's reports were gathered, edited, and made ready for publication by one member of the group. As noted earlier, this conference also prompted increased interest among the instructors in our project in perhaps proposing a panel discussion for next year's conference based on their

experiences in designing a collaborative teacher-based research model.

STUDENT ATTENDANCE IN ABE CLASSES

Of all the issues considered by instructors, the issue of irregular attendance was the one that surfaced most often. Adult learners almost always have multiple commitments and demands upon their time and energy, including holding one or more jobs, caring for and supporting families, finding reliable child care, etc. The time and motivation to pursue education are often compromised by these factors. Even the most motivated adult student may find it difficult to maintain a regular schedule for study and some drop out of programs for weeks and months at a time, if not altogether.

In the classroom, therefore, an instructor may begin a lesson on Monday hoping to continue to build on it throughout the week, only to find that Monday's attenders do not return and the lesson must be retaught for those attending on Wednesday, who may or may not return on Friday, etc. Instructors were concerned about the potential for doing research with such a fluid population. Even case studies, which they identified as potentially the most adaptable method for research with this population, would be difficult to carry out with any longevity.
It was suggested that perhaps a "profile" of the ABE student, derived from numerous short-term case studies and developed collaboratively, would be an effective research method. It would also be a way to document those special qualities and challenges encountered by this population.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Two issues were raised related this to general concern. The first was in regard to student confidentiality, the second concerned the issue of trust between and among instructors and administrators.

The issue of student confidentiality was first raised in the meeting where methodology was the topic for discussion. Articles read for that meeting included two which involved students as co-researchers (Johnston in Lytle, Cochran-Smith, 1991:178-185; Swingen, in Nagel, 1995, pp.14-21). Another (Childs, 1993), read later by the group was an open letter soliciting a student's participation as informant in a research project. The potentially sensitive nature of student information was discussed by the group and the need to ensure confidentiality for participating students. Instructors wondered whether names should be changed in any final report and if written permission should be obtained prior to collecting data. It was agreed that the best policy would be to involve students in the beginning of any project, carefully explaining that research that would be conducted and how students might be involved. Obtaining written permission seemed to be a prudent thing to do and protecting student identities through the use of pseudonyms was also encouraged.

Another issue, confidentiality and sharing of instructor's research findings was also the source of discussion at several meetings, especially where issues of the potential political impact of teacher research were identified. As mentioned previously, some instructors felt uncomfortable with sharing their shortcomings with others, fearing they would appear incompetent. In

addition, instructors expressed some apprehension at sharing issues of a sensitive political nature. They acknowledged concern about the ramifications of exposing shortcomings at their institutions or among their administrators or peers in published reports or presentations. As a matter of fact, this issue was the topic of some discussion at the AROW Conference, where an instructor told of needing to mediate between her student teacher-researchers and the school administration when research topics included descriptions of gang-related activity at the school. The administration, it seemed, was not anxious to call community or media attention to these problems. The instructors in our study felt somewhat vulnerable to potentially damaging criticism, which might affect the tenure of their positions.

INSTRUCTOR ISOLATION AND COLLEGIAL SUPPORT

The issues identified by participants in this project should be of particular interest to educators and administrators contemplating institutionalizing teacher research in an adult education setting. The instructors in this project taught adult basic education and English-as-a-second language classes. They were part-time instructors and four of the five taught at outreach sites. One instructor taught at three different sites concurrently during the year. The geographical isolation of these sites and class schedules contributed to their physical isolation. They interacted professionally with one another and other teachers in the Technical College District only rarely at staff meetings and in-services. This isolation was identified as an issue that would negatively impact doing teacher research. The group felt that collegiality and support were essential to a research project. They concluded that given their teaching situations it would be best to conduct a shared project or projects, on which all or some worked collaboratively and met regularly to discuss their work.

INSTRUCTOR TIME AND SUPPORT

Instructors felt that time constraints and financial support were critical issues. As part-time instructors, they currently are paid only for time spent in instruction. No prep time or additional time spent in grading papers, etc. is paid time. As noted above, most had second jobs, and additionally had their own family commitments. While they were extremely excited about the possibility of doing classroom research, they were not willing to add additional unpaid duties to their already formidable time commitments. They also acknowledged the real personal and professional gains provided by collaboration as they met for this project, but felt the motivation to do so without the support afforded by the project this year was minimal. They suggested that instructors might be allowed to use staff development funds to support collaborative teacher-based research meetings, data collection and analysis and write-up. This, in fact, has been done in the Commonwealth of Virginia, where the state has mandated funding to support all activities related to teacher-based research through an innovative staff development initiative.

Instructors also acknowledged that it would be difficult to convince administrators and peers of the value of supporting research without first having done it and reported findings that would lend credibility to instructors' claims of its veracity. The question then becomes one of the

point at which change is initiated and who takes responsibility for initiating it.

TEACHER RESEARCH
ONE YEAR PILOT IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

This plan is based to a great extent on the recommendations of the teacher participants in our project. The plan assumes that a pilot project has funding for a coordinator and/or consultant, teacher salaries for meetings and research, purchasing and duplicating materials. We have included an estimate of teacher paid project time at the end of the plan. A specific budget has not been included.

July/August

Project staff will have three initial tasks:

1. *Recruitment of participants*. To ensure that the pilot project begins in a timely manner, participants should be identified by mid-August. A letter should be mailed in early July to all teaching staff informing them about the purpose of the project, benefits of their participation, and the expectations (time, responsibilities, etc.) for participants. An additional benefit of the mailing will be to generally inform staff about the project and increase peer support for participants. An informational meeting will be scheduled during July to provide more information to interested teachers.
2. *Build administrative support*. Administrative support is critical to the success of a teacher research project. Meetings should be held at the outset of the project to increase administrator understanding of teacher research, its potential benefits for the program, and the nature of administrative support that will be required. Administrators may be invited to the informational meeting in July and to the initial training meeting in August to communicate their support for the project.
3. *Prepare materials for teacher training*. Project staff will need to select appropriate materials for an introductory mailing and the initial training sessions. Some suggestions for these materials are described in the next section.

August/September

The emphasis in this phase of the project is teacher orientation, initial training, and establishment of a climate of group support and teamwork.

1. *Introductory mailing to participants*. An "introductory kit" should be mailed to participants about two weeks prior to the initial training session. This kit can include the following: (a) an overview of the pilot project, with a timeline of activities; (b) a list of all participants and contact information; and (c) introductory readings that provide an overview of teacher research and examples of potential research projects (such as *Field-Based Research: A Working Guide*).
2. *Initial training sessions*. Approximately eight hours of training should be scheduled in August and September. The number and duration of each session will likely be contingent on the teaching schedules of participants. Ideally, at least one session should be scheduled before or close to the

beginning of classes. Shorter more frequent meetings may be more effective in building camraderie and allowing time for reflection than a single marathon session. Following is one example using three meetings:

Meeting # 1 (August, 2 hours)
(a) Review of project goals, expectations, and time commitment. This should include discussion of potential outcome expectations, in terms of sharing research results through presentations or reports.
(b) Ask teachers to introduce themselves to each other and share their reasons for participating in the project and in teacher research.
(c) Discussion of the nature of teacher research and the initial readings that relate to this..
(d) Discuss journal writing and its uses in teacher research.
(e) Provide teachers with a bound set of readings that serve as a reference for further training and their own use.
(f) Assign readings on selecting a research question and ask teachers to begin journal writing.
(g) Set up site visit times for project staff to observe teachers' classrooms (to increase staff understanding of each teacher's situation and students; to establish rapport among staff and teachers).

Meeting # 2 (early September, three hours)
(a) Discussion of journal writing. Ask teachers to share excerpts from journals and discuss their reactions, concerns, or questions.
(b) Discussion of general issues or concerns related to teacher research (ie transient populations) and focus on practical approaches to addressing these concerns.
(c) Discussion of possible research questions and the readings related to identifying questions. Share examples generated by other teachers. Teachers can be asked to fill out the pages in *Field-Based Research* on discovering a discovering a question, focusing on a question, and articulating a question.
(d) Assign readings on research methodologies and types of teacher research and ask teachers to identify one or more potential research questions for next meeting.

Meeting # 3 (late September, three hours)
(a) Share potential research questions and use group process to encourage refinement and clarification of questions. The following brainstorming technique modelled at the AROW conference (by Nan Youngerman) might be used. Each participant is allotted about 20 minutes for discussion of their question(s). Another member of the group takes notes on the discussion. This allows the person whose question is being discussed to concentrate on the discussion. The rest of the group poses questions and offers suggestions to refine or reframe the potential research focus. The individual is not left with a final solution but with multiple ideas that she or he can review and evaluate later.
(b) Discussion of how teacher research can be conducted. Provide a brief overview with examples of each. This can be continued in the first October meeting.
(c) Ask teachers to continue to refine their questions and begin to think about potential data

coliection methods. Refer them to readings with more information about specific methods.

October - June

During this period, meetings should be held twice a month (with the exception of December and January) and shoudl be three hours in length. They should be viewed primarily as working meetings in which teachers give each other support and feedback on their projects. More detailed recommendations are provided below.

October/November

The emphasis in these two months is refining research questions and beginning data collection.

1. *Refinement of research questions.* At the first October meeting, teachers should continue the brainstorming technique for refining their questions. Preliminary research questions should be identified by the second meeting in late October. It should be stressed that questions can be further refined or modified as the research process continues.

2. *Beginning data collection.* The overview of research methods can be continued in the first October meeting. Specific data collection methods can be discussed in the second October meeting and in the November meetings. Teachers should begin data collection in early November, and meetings can address issues related to the specific methods they have chosen.

3. *Teacher collaboration.* As research questions are refined, teachers should be encouraged to consider the potential for collaborative research projects. In addition, the teachers can be asked to identify partners for mutual support between meetings, based on similar research interests or other preferences.

4. *Student involvement.* Student involvement in teacher research and legal/ethical issues related to their involvement should be discussed as research questions are refined. (See ethical guidelines in *Field-Based Research: A Working Guide*).

December/January

This is typically a time when student attendance drops off due to holidays and inclement weather. This is likely to affect data collection for most teacher research projects. Accordingly, while teachers should still collect data as much as possible during December and January, the focus of meetings and individual work shifts to include preliminary data analysis. Due to holidays, it seems most reasonable to schedule one meeting per month, in early December and in late January.

(a) *Introduction to data analysis.* Introduce data analysis methods during the early December meeting. Stress that data analysis is typically an ongoing process. Ask teachers to begin preliminary analysis of data. Project staff may wish to spend some individual time between meetings with each teacher during this period to provide some guidance in this process. It may also be a good time to review their research focus and make further refinements if necessary.

(b) *Feedback on data analysis.* At the January meeting, teachers can share some of their prelimary analyses and obtain feedback from other participants. Further discussion of data analysis procedures, drawing on readings as relevant to the projects.

(c) *Data collection.* Teachers should continue with data collection as possible and appropriate to their projects. Time during meetings should be allocated for questions and concerns about data collection.

February/March/April

In this phase, data gathering and analysis continues. Teachers should also begin to think about and prepare ways of sharing their research findings.

1. *Sharing research findings.* Alternative ways of sharing research findings should be introduced at one of the February meetings, using readings such as the "Reporting" section in *Field-Based Research*. Teachers should be encouraged to begin experimenting with ways of writing about their findings in their journals, as possible preparation for a more formal report. Everyone should have a plan for sharing their research by the beginning of April. They might consider preparing a collaborative report. Informal presentations of findings to the group can be part of the meetings.
2. *Data collection.* The period of data collection will vary according to teacher's projects, but everyone should be encouraged to complete their data collection by the end of April, to allow sufficient time for final analysis and preparing findings for reporting.
3. *Data analysis.* Meetings can address how to analyze data in more detail. Teachers can work with partners or in small groups to support each other's analysis.
4. *Oral presentations.* Teachers can consider doing oral presentations of their preliminary findings findings at AROW conference or at staff development meetings. Such presentations could be helpful for receiving feedback and planning written reports. The group also might consider a joint presentation in which they focus on issues related to teacher research in adult literacy education or another topic of common concern.

May/June

In this last phase, the primary task is preparing the final research report. Teachers can decide what form this should take. The tasks below assume that some kind of written report will be prepared, but teachers have the option of not doing a written report if they are more comfortable with another mode of reporting.

1. *Feedback on drafts.* The last meetings should be devoted to sharing report drafts and obtaining feedback. Draft reports should be distributed prior to the meetings so that teachers can prepare thoughtful and detailed feedback.
2. *Final report.* The final research reports should be done by mid June.
3. *Evaluation of teacher research process.* The final meeting can be used for reflection on the pilot project, what went well and what parts of the process might be improved, and how we might support teacher research on a more permanent basis. Discussion can also include how to present the project story and results to other program teachers, staff, and administrators.

Teacher Paid Project Time

1. 8 hours for initial training meetings
2. 4 hours preparation time for initial meetings
3. 48 hours for monthly meetings (2 per month from October - June, with one meeting per month in December and January)
4. 108 hours for research-related work completed in addition to meetings (3 hours per week for 36 weeks)

Total per teacher: 168 hours

CONCLUSION

At the conclusion of this project, project staff and participating teachers were excited by the potential value of teacher-based research. Several teachers involved in this year's project expressed interest in participating in the pilot study itself. All teachers felt that they had learned a great deal from this year's planning process. Not only were they more informed about teacher-based research, they also felt they had gained new insights that already affected their teaching practice. Several of them noted that our group discussions had increased their motivation to make improvements in their teaching, and the realization that they could do research as teachers was exciting and empowering.

Unfortunately, we received notification in mid-June that the pilot study would not be funded for the coming year. We spent some time at our final project meeting expressing our disappointment and frustration about devoting so much time and effort to a planning process and accumulation of resources for a project that would never be realized. However, the loss of funding forced us to confront a central issue: is teacher-based research feasible without the support and resources provided by additional funding? While several of the teachers were interested in doing research, they acknowledged that they would be unlikely to devote the additional time without compensation. Time was a particular issue since they were all part-time teachers who were not paid for any time beyond actual instructional hours. In addition, the provision of support in terms of organizing group meetings, training and so forth did not seem possible without some staff time designated for this purpose. Staff development funds available to each teacher were minimal and would not begin to compensate them for time in training or research activities.

So we conclude this project with a question: what will be necessary to make teacher-based research a viable approach to staff development and knowledge creation in adult literacy education? Issues of time, support, and resources seem to be more problematic in adult literacy programs than in K-12 programs, where we found most of the published examples of teacher research efforts. The preponderance of part-time teachers, minimal attention and resources devoted to staff development, and the uncertainty of yearly project funding are among the factors that work against the establishment of a teacher-based research program. Broader changes in the philosophy and structure of adult literacy education may be necessary to support teacher-based research as more than an experimental project.

However, we remain positive about the potential benefits of teacher-based research, both for improving the practice of individual teachers and for the field of adult literacy education as a whole. We hope that our plan and the annotated bibliography will be helpful to other teachers and programs that wish to initiate their own research activities.

REFERENCES

See the annotated bibliography for full bibliographic citations of all literature cited in this report.

APPENDIX

Teacher-Based Research: An Annotated Bibliography of Selected Resources

ALTERNATIVE LEARNING DIVISION

Madison Area Technical College

Adult Basic Education Department
Downtown Education Center

TEACHER-BASED RESEARCH:

AN ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY OF SELECTED RESOURCES

1996

TEACHER-BASED RESEARCH:
AN ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY OF SELECTED RESOURCES

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COLLABORATIVE TEACHER-BASED RESEARCH PROJECT
AN ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY OF SELECTED RESOURCES

Introduction

This bibliography was compiled during the 1995-96 project year as part of a demonstration project funded by the State Board of the Wisconsin Technical College System. The goal of the project was to research and develop a training process in teacher-based research for implementation as a pilot during the 1996-97 year. To this end an extensive literature search was conducted. Sources were identified through an investigation of current literature, including books, journals, and newsletters, most of which were identified as a result of a on-line search of ERIC resources. While there is an ever-increasing body of literature to be found under the designation "teacher research," "practitioner research," "inquiry-based research," and "action research," the majority of work has been done in the area of K-12, with only recent interest and publication in teacher-based research in adult basic education.

Some items selected for this bibliography were reviewed by the instructors who served as practitioner informants to the project. These readings were used to supplement on-going training and discussion generated in regularly scheduled meetings of the teacher research group, which included the instructors and project facilitators. Instructors' and facilitators' reactions to those readings are included wherever possible. Additional resources, which provide information presumed to be useful to the 1996-97 project, as well as to continuing staff development in the process of collaborative teacher-based research, are also included.

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COLLABORATIVE TEACHER-BASED RESEARCH
ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Anderson, Gary L., Kathryn Herr and Ann Sigrid Nihlen, "Qualitative Research Approaches for Everyday Realities," in *Studying Your Own School* (Thousand Oaks, California: Corwin Press, Inc., 1994) pp. 106-170.

Excellent resource for detailed discussion of research methods. Interviews, (open ended and structured, oral history and stories), questionnaires, check lists, rating scales, inventories, observation, journals, personal logs, mapping, visual and audio recording techniques, use of archives and documents discussed in detail. Methods of analysis and reflection also included.

Anderson, Gary L., Kathryn Herr and Ann Sigrid Nihlen, "Empowerment and Practitioner Research *An Example*," in *Studying Your Own School* (Thousand Oaks, California: Corwin Press, Inc., 1994) pp. 80-105.

Anderson et al discuss the complex political issues encountered in an attempt to promote organizational change. The example provided is a study undertaken by one of the authors, Herr, who observed and analyzed interracial interaction among high school students. Disjunction was noted between the "surface" level of organizational functioning, school policy which prohibited racism, and the "deep" level, in which African American students had no voice. Initiating the process of critical analysis and change, the students formed an ethnically diverse group to dialogue with one another and to inform organizational and public discourse. This study also provides insight into the practitioners' dilemma in becoming intimately involved in an action research project. The article was read with interest by instructors in our project, although they seemed more intrigued by the content of the study, rather than its focus on the nature of critical action research and organizational dissonance.

Atkin, J. Myron, "Teacher Research to Change Policy: An Illustration," in *Teacher Research and Educational Reform*, edited by Sandra Hollingsworth and Hugh Sockett (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), pp. 103-203.

A 1988 study conducted by a small group of teachers in California's mentor-teacher program who deliberately used their research as a means to change policy. Atkins feel that teachers are usually the "missing ingredient" in decisions that impact their teaching. This group set out to change that. Through research, report writing, publication, and lobbying, they were able to positively influence the fate of the mentor-teacher program when it was threatened during a budget crunch.

Belzer, Alisa, "Doing School Differently," in *Inside/Outside Teacher Research and Knowledge* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993) pp. 276-283.

Belzer, an adult literacy teacher, shares some of her less-than-successful experiences with adult learners and what she learned from them. She views the "differences" in teacher and learner

perspectives and expectations, as opportunities to grow together. The instructors in our study enjoyed this article very much, and admired Belzer's honesty and courage in sharing these experiences.

Berlin, James A. "The Teacher as Researcher: Democracy, Dialogue, and Power," in *The Writing Teacher as Researcher*, edited by Donald A. Daiker and Max Morenberg (Portsmouth: NH: 1990) pp. 3-14.

Berlin is concerned with the ways in which teacher-based research can empower practitioners and effect change. Research, he feels must be situated within the larger political and social context. Berlin assails what he views as political motives to vilify the educational system and educators. He agrees there are many flaws in the system, however, and cites the promotion of standardized testing as one way an inequitable status quo is maintained. He also feels that teachers' jobs are being reduced to mechanistic techniques which, in effect, teacher-proof the curriculum and the classroom. Teacher research, he believes, is a way to reinstate the teacher role and to redirect the focus of education. "The teacher-as-researcher concept displays the potential to become a revolutionary force in schooling," he concludes.

Bissex, Glenda L., "Small Is Beautiful: Case Study as Appropriate Methodology for Teacher Research," in *The Writing Teacher as Researcher*, edited by Donald A. Daiker and Max Morenberg, (Portsmouth, N.H.: Boynton/Cook Publishers, 1990), pp. 70-75.

Utilizing case studies in teacher research. The author defines case study as a "reflective story of the unfolding, over time, of a series of events involving particular individuals." Emphasis on the individual and the specific.

Burnaford, Gail, "A Life of Its Own: Teacher Research and Transforming the Curriculum," chapter three in *Teachers Doing Research*, edited by Gail Burnaford, Joseph Fischer and David Hobson, (Mahwah, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Publishers, 1996) pp. 57-81.

Teachers have traditionally been mandated to follow prepared curriculum guides. Burnaford feels these should be "informational tools," while curriculum is constructed through the process of classroom dynamics. Her goal is to establish a relationship between teaching methods, lesson content, and the real worlds and needs of students. She suggests that teachers look at curriculum as an area for research and reevaluation. Chapter includes a thoughtful discussion of the uses of existing literature as a tool in classroom-based research, suggestions for ways to approach the literature, double-entry journaling as a reading and reflecting tool, and a list of selected journals for teacher-researchers. Instructors in our project appreciated the list of related journals with which they were, for the most part, unfamiliar. Burnaford argues for an inductive, qualitative approach to research and emphasizes the transformative value of classroom research in curriculum design.

Childs, Sondra, "A Letter to Meredith," *Teacher Research*, Vol. 1, No. 1, Fall (1993) pp. 122-124.

Childs contributes a sample letter she sent to a student she was recruiting as an informant in her classroom research. It serves as an example of the way in which a student's participation may be sensitively elicited, while also securing written permission for her to join the research study.

Cochran-Smith and Susan L. Ltyle, "Learning From Teacher Research: A Working Typology," chapter two in *Inside/Outside Teacher Research and Knowledge* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993) pp. 23-40.

Excellent overview and discussion of the concept of teacher research. The authors propose a working typology for teacher research that includes four types of empirical and conceptual work; teachers' journals, oral inquiries, classroom studies, and essays. Empirical research includes the collection, analysis and interpretation of data. The types of studies subsumed in this category include, 1) journals (which record observations, analyze experiences, and reflect on and interpret practice), 2) oral inquiries (the oral examination of classroom/school issues involving collaborative analysis and interpretations), and 3) classroom/school studies (exploration of practice-based issues using a variety of data to generate questions for either individual or collaborative study). Conceptual research involves the theoretical/philosophical work or analysis of ideas. It is used in essays, which involve teachers' interpretations of the assumptions and characteristics of classrooms and/or research itself. Teacher research is defined as systematic and intentional inquiry usefully described within the above analytical framework. Example of each type of research process are included. The framework was considered to be a useful heuristic device by the facilitators but selections from this text were described as too pedantic and filled with jargon by some instructors.

Cochran-Smith and Susan L. Lytle, "Teacher Research: A Way of Knowing," chapter three in *Inside/Outside Teacher Research and Knowledge* (New York: Columbia University Press (1993), pp. 41-61

This chapter challenges the assumption that a "knowledge base" for teaching generated by university-based researchers is the only validated and valuable way of knowing. Cochran-Smith and Lytle argue "teacher researchers are uniquely positioned to provide a truly emic, or insider's perspective that makes visible the ways that students and teachers together construct knowledge and curriculum." Teacher research may generate both local and public knowledge, that is, knowledge for one's own practice, for the immediate community of teachers, and for the larger community of educators.

Cockley, Suzanne, *The Adult Educator's Guide to Practitioner Research*, (Dayton, VA.: The Virginia Adult Educators Research Network, 1993), 62 pages.

An excellent "how to" guide and one of the few resources targeting adult educators. The "hands-down" favorite of the adult educators participating in our project. The guide introduces the

concept of practitioner research, discusses strategies and methods, and sharing findings. A useful section entitled "What To Do If You Get Stuck," provides helpful hints for continuing in the research process. Also included are several case studies that the teachers in our project found extremely useful. Appendices explain the ERIC system, provide a suggested outline for writing up research, and list resources available from the Virginia Adult Educators Research Network.

Colgan-Davis, Penny, "Learning About Learning Diversity, in *Inside/Outside Teacher Research and Knowledge* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993) pp. 163-169.

Instructors found this study relevant because they must also work with differently-abled students on a daily basis. They also appreciated the insights into the group dynamics of teachers working collaboratively to resolve issues of practice.

Connelly, F. Michael and D. Jean Clandinin, "The Promise of Collaborative Research in the Political Context," in *Teacher Research and Educational Reform*, edited by Sandra Hollingsworth and Hugh Sockett (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), pp. 86-102.

A study of the political nature of collaborative research. In addition to the political relationships generated by collaborative work, the political context is created by the cultural, social, and institutional setting of the research. The university has been the "owner" of research and theory, the school has been perceived as the source of practical knowledge. The value of changing the political climate as it has existed between university and school, lies in creating a more equitable, shared, respectful and reciprocal relationship which will ultimately improve schools and result in a gradual change in the educational experience.

Crandall, J. "Creating a Professional Workforce in Adult ESL Literacy, ERIC Digest (Washington, DC: National Clearinghouse for Literacy Education, 1994) pp. 1- 6 (ED 369 308)

Discusses the need for professionalization in ESL instruction. The part-time and limited term nature of most ESL instructors' employment and the lack of standardization of instruction are problematic. Certification through completion of university course work is one option, but Crandall believes that credentialing as a part of practice is a better one. Using a combination of three models is proposed. The first, the mentoring model, relies on more experienced ESL practitioners to train new practitioners, the second, the "from theory to practice" model, links instructors to relevant research and teaching information via technology such as video training. The third model is the inquiry of "reflective teaching" model, in which teachers research and reflect upon their own practice.

Drennon, Cassandra E. "Inquiry and Action: Implementation Guide for Program Administrators and Staff Development Facilitators. (Richmond, VA: Virginia Commonwealth University, 1994) pp. 1-82 (ED 371 237)

A guide for developing and implementing an inquiry-based staff development program in adult basic education. This model was developed for Virginia's staff development system and piloted during 1993-94. Staff development occurs in the context of practitioner's daily practice. The inquiry is conducted in a systematic and rigorous manner. The aim of inquiry is to generate new knowledge about adult literacy students and adult education practice. The guide is a "nuts and bolts" manual which includes procedures, guidelines and recommendations for the successful facilitation and administration of programs, as well as materials and forms for use by practitioners. Excellent section on reflective thinking, how to and value of.

Drennon, Cassie, "Adult Literacy Practitioners as Researchers: ERIC Digest (Washington, DC: National Clearinghouse for Literacy Education, Center for Applied Linguistics, 1994) pp. 1-6 (ED 372 663)

The article focuses on practitioner inquiry in ESL education and staff development. Inquiry is compatible with other adult education concepts, such as self-directed learning, reflective practice, learner-centeredness, and action research. It is a social and collaborative process. Examples of ESL projects currently in progress are presented. Challenges to conducting inquiry in the ESL/adult basic education setting are identified: time constraints, insufficient trust among teachers and between teachers and administrators, lack of commitment to and articulation of support by peers and administrators, and rigid policies which inhibit change.

Evans, Claryce, "Support for Teachers Studying Their Own Work," *Educational Leadership*, March, 1991, pp. 11-13.

Description of the Educator's Forum which Evans initiated in 1984. The two-hour forum, which meets every other week, provides the opportunity and structure for educators from the greater Boston area to come together to "gain a better understanding of their students, themselves, and their teaching." The teachers from a variety of public and private school systems identify classroom issues and or practices about which they would like to learn more. The members of the forum offer one another support and encouragement in a "safe" and confidential environment. At the time the article was written, the group had received funding for a three year project to expand the research groups and develop training materials for wider distribution.

Gillespie, Tim, "On Learning from the Inside: A Conversation with Glenda Bissex, *Teacher Research*, Vol. 1, Fall (1993), pp. 64-83.

Interview with one of the first and most ardent advocates of teacher research in the U.S.. Bissex discusses her history as a teacher and her early experiment with the case study method. She began her career as a teacher researcher by studying the literacy development of her son, Paul, which she recorded from his age five to eleven. Bissex emphasizes the importance of respect for one's research subjects, and the recognition of the subjective nature of observation. She offers additional experienced insight into the process of doing research, especially case studies. "We don't know enough based on our individual classroom case studies to know which are the

generalizations that will hold true for other teachers," she suggests, "but other teachers will know!"

Hatt, Cindy, "The Conversation of the Case Study," *Teacher Research*, Vol 1., No. 1, Fall (1993), pp. 106-115.

Hatt believes case studies are particularly effective methods for teacher research. She emphasizes the inductive nature of the research process and the need to listen to individual stories. In her view, the information gained from case studies can be used to contribute to the larger human conversation. She references two well-known case studies as examples of the ways in which careful observation and description can illuminate the lives and contexts of individuals in a way the quantitative data cannot.

Headman, Robin, "Parents and Teachers as Co-Investigators," in *Inside/Outside Teacher Research and Knowledge*, by Marilyn Cochran Smith and Susan L. Lytle (New York: Teachers College Press, 1993), pp. 220-230.

A fourth grade teacher's experience involving student's parents as co-researchers to learn about literacy as it is transmitted in both the home and school environments. Interesting for case study but perhaps of limited or oblique value for teachers of adult literacy.

Hollingsworth, et al, "Taking Social Action," chapter nine, in *Teacher Research and Urban Literacy Education*, (NY: Teachers College Press, 1994) pp. 157-182

The chapter presents teachers' voices as they grapple with the need to take social action in their urban school settings. The teachers in this "conversation group" discuss their concerns, challenges, and frustrations with "top down" policy decisions which they feel are not informed by the realities of teaching in an urban setting.

Hollingsworth, et al, "A Conversation on Teacher Research," chapter ten, in *Teacher Research and Urban Literacy Education*, (NY: Teachers College Press, 1994) pp. 183-195.

This chapter continues the dialogue begun in chapter nine, though reflections on taking social action for change. A dialogue regarding the validity of teacher research is insightful and addresses an issue discussed at length by the teachers in our project.

Hubbard, Ruth Shagoury, "Extensions: Making Sense of Teaching Tensions Through Writing," *Teacher Research*, Vol. 3, Number 1, Fall (1995) pp. 140-143.

Brief article with good tips for keeping a journal and keeping the process of journaling lively and personal. Emphasis is on the importance of writing to the research process. Some useful hints for "renewing" one's journaling. Hubbard suggests writing about that which annoys or bothers you. Use writing to make sense of "teaching tensions." If you are feeling "journaled out," then using

new tools, a different writing pad, colored and/or unusual pens and pencils may help. Feel free to include drawings, musical notations, whatever suits you. Other hints for organizing and recording are included.

Hubbard, Ruth Shagoury, "Seeing What is Not Seen: Another Reason for Writing Up Teacher Research," *Teacher Research*, Vol 1, No. 1, Fall (1993) pp. 143-147.

Investigating writing as a part of the process rather than just the product of teacher research. Writing is used to clarify the focus of the study, to find patterns in the data, and to provide new insights into the research question. Suggestions from a group of teachers include, using writing as a brainstorming tool, as a basis for review and reflection, and as a way of sharing with colleagues and eliciting feedback. The importance of having and maintaining a deadline for the finished draft is also discussed.

Jaroski, Sharon, Ed., *Field Based Research: A Working Guide*, (British Columbia: Ministry of Education and Ministry Responsible for Multiculturalism and Human Rights, 1992, (Reprinted 1995) 53 pages.

Working guide intended to provide support to educators interested in or involved in classroom research. Direct and easy-to-read, the guide presents sample worksheets and supplements (such as a sample client permission form) and checklists to direct the research process. Based on the questions, concerns, and issues identified by 25 research groups in British Columbia from 1991-1992, the guide introduces teacher research, discusses research questions, the research plan, collecting data, organizing and analyzing data methods of reporting.

Johnson, Patricia, "Lessons From the Road: What I Learned Through Teacher Research," in *Inside/Outside Teacher Research and Knowledge*, by Marilyn Cochran Smith and Susan L. Lytle (New York: Teachers College Press 1993) pp. 178-184.

A teacher describes her professional growth and development resulting from invoking students as co-researchers in the classroom. Learning about students as readers and thinkers through the use of structured reflection and group dynamics.

Lather, Patti, "Critical Frames in Educational Research: Feminist and Post-structural Perspectives," Theory Into Practice, Vol. XXXI, Number 2, Spring (1992) pp. 87-99.

Lather is concerned with the development of a critical educational research paradigm. Her approach is informed by post-positivist, post-structural and feminist theory. She explores these theories as they have figured in the development of critical ethnography in social science. Her highly theoretical and deliberately controversial stance make for interesting if somewhat obtuse reading.

Levy, Steven, "Sneakers," *Teacher Research*, Vol. 1, No. 1, Fall (1993), pp. 84-86.

Brief but moving essay illustrating the descriptive value of the case study, as well as the appeal of teachers' stories. A small classroom incident is used to provide insight into a caring student-teacher relationship.

Lytle, Susan L. and Marilyn Cochran-Smith, "Inquiry, Knowledge, and Practice," in *Teacher Research and Educational Reform*, edited by Sandra Hollingsworth and Hugh Sockett (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994) pp 22-51.

Much of the same material presented in the chapters in Inside/Outside cited above. Includes, however, a useful discussion of the political ramifications of teacher research and its potential for radically changing the entire educational system. Very theoretical article and not an "easy read."

Lytle, Susan L., Alisa Belzer and Rebecca Reumann, *Initiating Practitioner Inquiry: Adult Literacy Teachers, Tutors, and Administrators Research Their Practice*, NCAL Technical Report TR93-11, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania, National Center on Adult Literacy, 1993) 57 pages.

Based on reports from the Adult Literacy Practitioner Inquiry Project (ALPIP), the report focuses on "inquiry-centered" staff development. Critical to this approach is the notion of "research community" in which practitioners participate in a seminar to "critically analyze their own experiences and the literature from a field-based perspective." The process is a form of staff development that ultimately contributes to the knowledge base of the community and the field. Emphasis is on the knowledge and experience practitioners bring to the field and the utilization of this knowledge to rethink and reform practice. The nature of this inquiry is collaborative, systematic, program-based and results in dissemination of the findings. Good discussion of the role of dissonance in the formulation of research questions.

Lytle, Susan L., Alisa Belzer and Rebecca Reumann, *Invitations to Inquiry: Rethinking Staff Development in Adult Literacy Education*, NCAL Technical Report TR92-2, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania, National Center on Adult Literacy, 1992) 40 pages.

Preliminary report to that discussed above, this study reports on the inception and progress of the Adult Literacy Practitioner Inquiry Project (ALPIP). The notion of inquiry-centered staff development is introduced. The report addresses important issues of retention and learning in adult literacy education and rethinking the nature of staff development to allow for a reflective and proactive role for adult literacy practitioners. Lytle et al argue that the field of adult literacy education is itself sufficiently different from the K-12 experience, so as to warrant rethinking professional development. Teachers need to be seen as knowledge generators and the concept of "knowledge base," particularly in adult literacy education, needs to be reexamined. Issues and problems associated with adult literacy teaching and programs, such as work site and facilities problems, issues of part-time versus full-time staffing and isolation were reported by ALPIP participants.

Martin, Gail, "*From* A Letter to Bread Loaf," in *Reclaiming the Classroom*, edited by Dixie Goswami and Peter R. Stillman, (Portsmouth, NH: Boynton/Cook Publishers, 1987). 165-169.

Martin's work with Arapaho students provides provocative evidence of the teaching practice may need to accommodate cultural differences. An excellent example of the ways in which dissonance can inspire research.

Mohr, Marian M. And Marion S. MacLean, Working Together (Urbana, IL, National Council of Teachers of English, 1987).

Subtitled "A Guide for Teacher-Researchers, this is one of the early and most often cited resources for teacher researchers. It contains valuable discussions of the basics of teacher research and includes exerpts from actual research reports. Pages 52-53 provide a useful discussion of drafting research proposals and reports.

Moll, Luis C., et al "Funds of Knowledge for Teaching: Using a Qualitative Approach to Connect Homes and Classrooms," *Theory Into Practice*, Vol. XXXI, Number 2, Spring (1992), pp. 132-141.

Study conducted by university ethnographers and teacher researchers in the homes of Hispanic students. The researchers found that students bring unique and important forms of knowledge to the classroom from their home environments. These "funds of knowledge" help to guide and create new opportunities for instruction. Instructors in our project found this especially valuable to "ESL, multi-cultural classroom research."

Moss, R. Kay, "Sharing Your Research Findings through Publication and Service," in *Teacher Research from Promise to Power*, (NY: Richard C. Owens, Publ., Inc., 1990) pp. 57-65.

Teacher research is often undertaken to inform or improve one's own practice, however Moss feels that sharing research findings through publication and service is a way to help clarify personal theory, help colleagues and build collective theory. Both methods for publishing a manuscript and for submitting a proposal for conference presentation are detailed.

Patterson, L., J. C. Stansell, and S. Lee, "Any Questions? Find the Answers in Your Classroom," in *Teacher Research from Promise to Power*, (NY: Richard C. Owens, Publ., Inc., 1990) pp. 7-21.

A step-by-step introduction to the research process, including finding and refining the research

question, identifying the data source, recording and analyzing data, "peer debriefing," keeping a log, writing and revising. Also addresses the usefulness of a literature source. One instructor described it as "somewhat daunting" for a beginner.

Patterson, Leslie, "Teaching, Researching, and Problem Solving," in *Teacher Research from Promise to Power* (NY: Richard C. Owens, Publ., Inc., 1990) pp. 22-36.

Patterson discusses the ways in which classroom inquiry was central to attaining a more self-reflective approach to decision making. The authors learns to use research as a powerful "problem solving tool." Interesting discussion of the process of learning to research and using inquiry to document change over time. The uses of qualitative vs. quantitative data are also examined.

Power, Brenda Miller, "Crawling on the Bones of What We Know: An Interview with Shirley Brice Heath, *Teacher Research*, Volume 3, Number 1, Fall (1995), pp. 23-35.

Shirley Brice Heath is a well-known writer and educator who has studied language and culture with diverse populations. The interview allows us to see the ways in which she connects research and teaching, and her use of careful observation as a tool for generating and answering questions. Not a "how to" article, but an insightful discussion of Heath's philosophy of research and teaching.

Saunders, Laura,"Unleashing the Voices We Rarely Hear: Derrick's Story," *Teacher Research*, Vol. 3, Number 1, Fall (1995), pp. 55-68.

Case study of student in a South Carolina high school, who had been labeled "learning disabled," and a "behavior problem." Through classroom inquiry, his teacher learned to use his relationship with his two close friends to facilitate his learning and appreciation of literature. Saunders came to understand the importance of social context for Derrick's learning. While this is not a study of adult learners, it is an enlightening look at the ways in which teacher research can transform both teacher and learner. Also an example of the ways in which use of professional literature can be used to better understand classroom phenomena. Reaffirms the value of the case study.

Schockley, Betty, "Reading Like a Researcher," Teacher Research, Vol 3, No. 1, Fall (1995) pp. 105-113.

A thoughtful, self-reflective examination of Shockley's's own literacy experience. She has learned to use the insights gained from reading fiction as a means of making sense of her own "story" as a teacher and researcher. She makes a strong case for life-long learning, reading, and writing.

Soltis, Jonas F., "The New Teacher," in *Teacher Research and Educational Reform*, edited by Sandra Hollingsworth and Hugh Sockett (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994) pp. 245-260.

Discussion of the potentially transformative nature of teacher research and its part in a greater philosophical paradigm shift toward humanism and democracy. Soltis portrays the "new teacher," striving toward "genuine intellectual engagement," socially and ethically sensitive, and sharing and supportive of her colleagues.

Strieb, Lynne Yermanock, "Visiting and Revisiting the Trees, in Inside/Outside Teacher Research and Knowledge, by Marilyn Cochran Smith and Susan L. Ltyle (New York: Teachers College Press, 1993), pp. 121-130.

A reflective example of the long-term use of a journal for data collection. Strieb is an elementary school teacher and this article deals with her experiences keeping a journal of her classroom activities. Some of the instructors in our study felt the article had little value for adult educators, others found it useful as a guide for journaling.

Swingen, Cindi and Nancy Nagel, "Immersed In Teacher Research And Learning As We Go," Teacher Research, Volume 3, Number 1, Fall (1995), pp. 14-21.

A research project with elementary math students is discussed. The authors believe that flexibility in research design and accommodation to the evolving nature of the project are essential. This is also an interesting example of the value of collaborative research.

Threatt, Susan, et al, "Teachers' Voices in the Conversation about Teacher Research," in *Teacher Research and Educational Reform*, edited by Sandra Hollingsworth and Hugh Sockett (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994) pp. 222-244.

Eight teachers discuss their own feelings about the meanings and purposes of doing teacher research. Opportunity to "eavesdrop" on groups' discussion about the positives, negatives, and controversial aspects of doing teacher research. Highly recommended by instructors in our project, who recommended this article be used as a part of a packet of introductory material for teachers unfamiliar with teacher research.

Zaharlick, Amy, "Ethnography in Anthropology and Its Value for Education," *Theory Into Practice*, Vol XXXI, Number 2, Spring (1992), pp. 132-141.

Discussion of using ethnographic methods in teacher research, such as incorporating holistic analysis, relativism and comparison. Viewing the classroom as a culture where the teacher acts as field worker, observing and recording. Informative but would be improved by including some discussion of the ways in which anthropological and classroom ethnography differ. Only a small portion of the article, that which discusses ethnography in education, was interesting to the participants in our project.

Zeichner, Kenneth M., "Personal Renewal and Social Construction through Teacher Research," in Teacher Research and Educational Reform, edited by Sandra Hollingsworth

and Hugh Sockett (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), pp. 66-84.

Zeichner is concerned that teacher research result in more "culturally responsive and equitable" teaching and is afraid that it "is not fulfilling its potential to play a part in the building of a more just world." Issues discussed include, who controls knowledge (teachers creating the knowledge base rather than being distributors of university-based research), teacher research as professional development and empowerment; action research and social change; action research and social justice. Zeichner is based at the University of Wisconsin, Madison and his work was therefore of great interest to the participants in our Collaborative Teacher-Based Research project.